FAIRFAX MEDIA ANNOUNCES METRO EDITORIAL LEADERSHIP CHANGES

SYDNEY and MELBOURNE, 13 FEBRUARY 2017: Fairfax Media has today announced editorial leadership changes across its metro mastheads The Sydney Morning Herald and The Age:

- Darren Goodsir leaves his role as Editor-in-Chief of The Sydney Morning Herald;
- James Chessell becomes National Editor with responsibility for federal politics, business and world coverage across The Sydney Morning Herald and The Age;
- Lisa Davies becomes Editor of The Sydney Morning Herald; and
- Alex Lavelle becomes Editor of The Age.

Editorial Director Sean Aylmer said: “These three accomplished Fairfax journalists step up into the roles as the most senior editorial voices of the mastheads.

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“Together, these editors ensure continued strength of the unique editorial voices of the SMH and The Age. They will deliver on the needs of their Sydney and Melbourne local audiences, and work collaboratively to deliver outstanding and unrivalled national coverage.

Mr Chessell, currently The Australian Financial Review’s European Correspondent and previously the title’s Business Editor, will lead the SMH and The Age’s federal politics, business and world coverage.

“James is the ideal candidate to further develop our mastheads’ agenda-setting business and national affairs coverage,” Mr Aylmer said.

“He is one of Australia’s best business journalists with extensive international experience and has an insider’s knowledge of the political landscape.”

Mr Chessell jointly won a prestigious Walkley Award for business journalism in 2014 and Citi Journalism Award for Excellence in 2013.

As Editors, Ms Davies and Mr Lavelle will be responsible for the mastheads’ NSW and Victorian and local coverage, including state parliament, transport, health, education, crime and courts, as well as sport, breaking news and investigations.
Ms Davies has held several senior reporting and editing roles at the SMH, most recently as Deputy Editor, Investigations Editor and Justice Editor.

“Lisa is an outstanding journalist with excellent news judgement,” Mr Aylmer said.

“She brings a depth of experience to running the newsroom and has demonstrated impressive leadership skills over the past 12 months.”

Mr Lavelle stepped up into the highest editorial position at The Age on an acting basis in December 2016. In May of the same year, he took on senior editorial duties at The Age, where he was worked since 1999 in several roles including Deputy News Director and Sports Editor.

“Alex has done an outstanding job during the past two months leading The Age newsroom, and in his prior roles, demonstrating his journalistic and management capabilities,” Mr Aylmer.

Mr Chessell, Ms Davies and Mr Lavelle will report to Editorial Director, Sean Aylmer.

DARREN GOODSIR

Earlier today Darren Goodsir informed the metro newsrooms of his decision to step down as Editor-in-Chief of The Sydney Morning Herald. He held the position for three-and-a-half years and worked in the industry for 32 years, including almost 20 years with various Fairfax titles.

Mr Aylmer said: “Darren’s an incredibly talented journalist. He’s more than made his mark during his outstanding 32 years in journalism.

“Darren has guided our Sydney newsroom through significant change in recent years and been instrumental in driving digital growth. As EIC of the SMH, he has overseen some of the most powerful journalism in the masthead’s long history.

“That the SMH reigns supreme as the nation’s number-one masthead across all platforms is a credit to Darren’s outstanding editorial leadership of an incredibly talented team.

“We wish Darren all the very best as he takes some time to enjoy life beyond the media industry.”

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